



2013 ■ VOLUME 60 ■ NUMBER 2

# PIONEER

**Mormon Pioneer Gardens**

*Special Feature:*  
**The Gardens at Thanksgiving Point**

*Published by the Sons of Utah Pioneers*



# PIONEER

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**MISSION STATEMENT:** The mission of the National Society of the Sons of Utah Pioneers is to preserve the memory and heritage of the early pioneers of the Utah Territory. We honor the pioneers for their faith in God, devotion to family, loyalty to church and country, hard work and service to others, courage in adversity, personal integrity, and unyielding determination. The society also honors present-day pioneers worldwide in many walks of life who exemplify these same qualities of character. It is further intended to teach these qualities to the youth, who will be tomorrow's pioneers.

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# President's Message

BY DAVID B. WIRTHLIN

And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it" (Isaiah 2:2).

Isaiah's prophecy of the last days was to our pioneer ancestors a description of their destiny. When they were driven from Nauvoo, Illinois, in February of 1846, they believed their mission was to establish a permanent home in the tops of the mountains and thereby fulfill Isaiah's prophetic words. This they did by enduring untold hardships to overcome the challenges of conquering the desert in the great Salt Lake Valley and throughout the West.

Isaiah made another prophecy about the Saints settling the West: "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose" (Isaiah 35:1). No matter where the Saints were, they always built their communities as if they would never have to leave them. Parley P. Pratt observed



as they left Nauvoo, "Our houses, our farms, this Temple and all we leave will be a monument

to those who may visit the place of our industry, diligence and virtue" (in James R. Clark, comp., *Messages of the First Presidency*, 6 vols. [1965–75], 1:283). Nauvoo today is a fulfillment of that dream. It has been restored to its former glory; it conveys to the minds of the thousands who visit there each year the phrase "Nauvoo the Beautiful."

This standard of establishing beautiful communities wherever the pioneers settled was carried forward as they settled the West. This edition will describe how the pioneers not only made the desert yield to their plantings of grains and alfalfa but will also describe their beautiful flower gardens. It will also describe how these traditions of beauty are being carried on in our day.

Today, visitors can hardly believe that the Wasatch Front was once a desolate place of sagebrush and rattlesnakes. How grateful we are to those faithful and dedicated pioneers who truly made the desert "blossom as the rose" and fulfilled Isaiah's prophecies of our day.

When Elder Ballard spoke at the Sons of Utah Pioneers Symposium Dinner, he suggested that the Director of This is the Place Heritage Park, Ellis Ivory, arrange to have a Sons of The Utah Pioneers Day this summer. This special family event will take place on July 29th from 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm. Members and

subscribers to this magazine will have free admission if you bring your families with you. You can pick up your tickets at the park's ticket office. All of the venues will be operating and the entire family can experience pioneer life with fun activities surrounded by the cabins, homes, and businesses of the pioneers. Elder Ballard will speak to us in the amphitheater at the conclusion of the evening. Please join us for this memorable event (see pp. 26–27 this issue). 📍

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### SUP EVENING at the PARK! July 29, 2013

4–9 p.m.

*This Is the Place Heritage Park*  
2601 E. Sunnyside Ave., SLC, UT  
**SUP members, bring your whole family for FREE admission.**

### 2013 National Convention August 22–24

*Keynote speaker: Mark Ricks, lifelong resident of Rexburg, local and state leader, descendant of Thomas E. Ricks*

**BYU–Idaho Campus, Rexburg, ID**  
*"Pioneering in Idaho," sponsored by the Upper Snake River Valley Chapter, assisted by the Eagle Rock, Grove City, and Pocatello Chapters.*





Artwork by Al Rounds

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# Growing the Kingdom

## *Mormon Pioneer Gardens*

BY EMILY BROOKSBY  
WHEELER, MA, MLA

Gardening was an essential activity for Utah's pioneers, especially in the first few years after their arrival, when it provided their only sustenance. Immigrants and missionaries brought seeds and starts to Utah from all over the world, and settlers scouted the local environment to find plants for their gardens. The gardens they created represented their desire for self-sufficiency in their new home in the Great Basin, but the gardens were also grown for pleasure and beauty. These gardens ultimately served as a testament of the pioneers' faith. The devotion and determination of the pioneers colored the Utah landscape as they gathered seeds, grafted trees, and planted flowers.

One of the first priorities of the Mormon pioneers when they arrived in the Salt Lake Valley was to grow food for themselves and those who would follow. Brigham Young encouraged gardening for self-sufficiency throughout the pioneer period, even when food became more plentiful.<sup>1</sup> His desire for self-sufficiency was echoed by other settlers. Edward Hunter, the head of the Deseret Agricultural and Manufacturing Society, said, "Satisfied that the future of any people is more dependent on their own hands, brains, untiring perseverance, and unconquerable will than on the best and most unbounded foreign assistance, we confess to

something bordering on an enthusiastic liking to the productions of our own Territory and the workmanship of our own hands."<sup>2</sup>

Gardening wasn't just for food, though. Church leaders also encouraged pioneers to make their homes beautiful and surround them with pleasant gardens. An oft-repeated idea credited to Brigham Young said, "Some will say that it is not worthwhile to plant around a log cabin. I say to you that it is worthwhile. Plant vines over your door, and trees, fruits and flowers so that every one who passes by will say 'What a lovely little cottage.'"<sup>3</sup> Most pioneers heeded this advice to beautify their homes and gardens. Visitors to Salt Lake City and other Mormon settlements frequently commented on the pleasant appearance of the towns.

When Utah's first non-Mormon governor, Alfred Cumming, and his wife, Elizabeth, first came to Salt Lake City in 1858, Elizabeth described the gardens surrounding the house where they stayed: "I wish I had a picture of it for you—for it is very pretty. It stands about 130 feet back from the street—flowers etc. in front—peach and other small trees on each side of the house and extending to the street—a large garden behind and on each side."<sup>4</sup> Those gardens provided the Cummings with food as well as a pleasant view. Other gardens also blended the beautiful with the practical. Some had areas for medicinal and culinary herbs among well-tended paths, benches, and grapevines.<sup>5</sup>



Many settlers saw their gardens not just as something for themselves, but as part of the work of building up God's kingdom on Earth. They were trying to create a home that was lasting and lovely, reflecting their faith. This attitude was promoted by Mormon leaders, who reminded Church members that they were to use all of their resources to build God's kingdom and that temporal work, including gardening, had spiritual significance and was a part of their religion.<sup>6</sup> A visitor to Utah, Elizabeth Kane, said of the settlers of the outlying Mormon communities: "Any reasonable people would have given up trying to produce fruit, but the Mormons are quite unreasonable in matters of faith. . . . They persevered, and so I know what perfectly delicious apples they now harvest."<sup>7</sup>

From numerous journals, letters, and newspaper articles it is clear that gardening wasn't just a chore

or a duty. Both men and women participated in gardening and found personal satisfaction in it. In 1866, after obeying the call to help settle southern Utah, Charles Lowell Walker recorded in his journal: "The leaves on the trees begin to appear fresh and green; also the pretty fruit blossoms delight the eyes and gladden the heart, after five years' toil to accomplish the beautifying of the desolate and forbidding desert region."<sup>8</sup> Walker clearly enjoyed the results of his gardening effort, both for their visual appeal and for the difficult achievement they represented.

Gardening may have had an even more important meaning for pioneer settlers who were far from home. The General Epistle of December 23, 1847, called upon the Mormons scattered in foreign countries to come quickly to the Utah Ter-

## First Experiences in Utah

Ground was flooded and the first plowing in the valley was begun on July 23 by the advance party. The next day saw the planting of potatoes and corn, for the colonists clearly foresaw the necessity for haste if anything was to be grown in the short season left. The colony was increased materially in the first week by the arrival of a company of Mississippi Saints and a detachment of the Mormon Battalion, which had wintered at Pueblo. With characteristic Mormon vigor all set to work, crops were planted, a stockade and several shelters erected, and small exploring excursions undertaken. One of the first trips was to the north along the foothills of the Wasatch, where the warm springs in the vicinity of North Salt Lake were discovered. Ensign Peak to the north, overlooking the city, was climbed and named; a party investigated Great Salt Lake and the valleys to the south; and the site for Salt Lake City was determined and a city survey begun by Orson Pratt.

By the end of the year the colonists had erected a fort to house them for the winter, had explored Tooele, Cache, Cedar, Rush, and Utah Valleys, reaped a meager harvest, established a stake of Zion, and cleared immense tracts of land for spring planting. Concerning



the activity of these months, Wilford Woodruff wrote, "We have accomplished more . . . than can be found on record concerning an equal number of men in the same time since the day of Adam." ▼

*Excerpts from Utah's Story, American Guide Series, Utah State Road Commission (1942), 51. This series was compiled by workers of the Writers' Program of the Work Projects Administration for the State of Utah.*



ritory, “bringing with you all kinds of choice seeds, of grain, vegetables, fruit, shrubbery, trees and vines, everything that will please the eye, gladden the heart, or cheer the soul of man, that grows upon the face of the whole earth.”<sup>9</sup> There was a practical aspect to this; it meant settlers were growing plants that they were familiar with and adding variety to the plants available in Utah. It also provided immigrants a connection to the homes and traditions they had left behind. They might be growing plants that had been handed down through their families and that gave them ingredients necessary to make the foods and medicines familiar to them.

Immigrants played a significant role in bringing garden plants to the Utah Territory. Mrs. Eliza Saunders Johnson, wife of nurseryman Joseph Ellis Johnson, is said to have walked across the plains carrying her baby so she could fill

her wagon with plants,  
which she watered  
whenever her  
party stopped  
near a river.<sup>10</sup>  
Another

woman, Elizabeth Payne Hobbley, carried a rose in a teapot all the way from England to Utah, while Edward Whiting brought peonies and roses across the plains.<sup>11</sup>

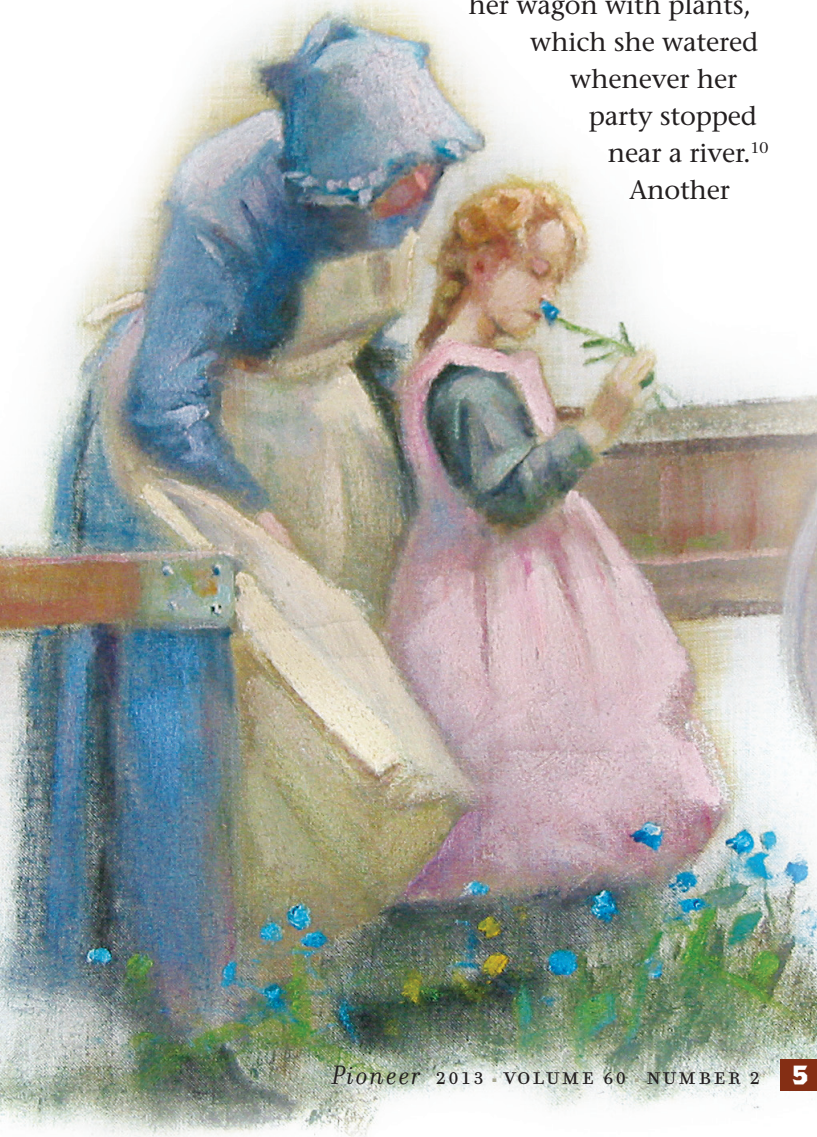
Seeds and cuttings took up less space than plants and were easier to transport. The first pioneers to reach the valley brought fruit seeds and pits with them, along with other seeds.<sup>12</sup>

Pioneers from the south carried the seeds of osage orange from their homes, and some of the other early settlers brought honey locust seeds in the fingers of their gloves.<sup>13</sup> Swiss pioneer Mary Ann Hafen recalled that her mother had to leave many valuables behind as they crossed the ocean and the plains, but once they got to southern Utah her mother planted the seeds she had “carefully carried from the old country.”<sup>14</sup> Missionaries also brought seeds back with them from distant lands, such as catalpa from Australia.<sup>15</sup>

Though the Transcontinental Railroad did not connect Utah to the rest of the country until 1869, California provided a link between the gardens of Utah and other parts of the world. There was constant, if slow, traffic between Salt Lake City and California during the pioneer period. Brigham Young sent settlers to California soon after Mormons arrived in Utah, and the Mormon Battalion came back to Utah through California once the Mexican–American War ended. After the Gold Rush of 1849, California nurseries regularly brought plants from the eastern United States, and gardeners and nurserymen in Utah imported these plants for their own use.<sup>16</sup>

## Swiss pioneer Mary Ann Hafen

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A final source for garden plants was the local environment. The first pioneers were quick to make use of native berries, and they sometimes moved native plants directly from the canyons to their yards. This included both edible and ornamental plants. The Petersen garden in Ephraim incorporated an old native juniper tree and other native plants like wild roses, chokecherries, elderberries, and strawberries.<sup>17</sup> Charles Walker reported in his journal that he brought wild currants and plums into his yard.<sup>18</sup> Nurseryman Joseph Ellis Johnson described the flowers he had transplanted from the mountains: "The modest snow drop, the gay gillia, the beautiful scarlet parstamon [penstemon], the beautiful lilly [segos], the gaudy columbino [columbine], the fragrant sweet pea, phlox, and half a score of others as sweet and fine."<sup>19</sup>

Once plants arrived in Utah, they could be re-distributed in a variety of ways. In the early pioneer era, settlers traded and sold plants, cuttings, and seeds with each other. Sarah Rich received rose cuttings from her husband, who was in California, and then shared them with others, including professional gardener William Staines.<sup>20</sup> Nurseries started selling plants around 1860. They advertised in newspapers and through paper catalogs, offering seeds and plants for edible crops as well as ornamental ones. Joseph Ellis Johnson was one of these early nursery-

men. He wrote newspaper articles for the *Deseret News* about gardening and ran a nursery in the Salt Lake area, but made his home in St.

George, where he imported a number of plants from California, including grapevines and roses, and experimented with bringing native plants into his garden.<sup>21</sup>

In addition to neighbors and nurseries, fairs and horticultural organizations were a valuable resource for learning about and

acquiring new plants. The Deseret Agricultural and Manufacturing Society strove to import plants from around the world and experiment with growing them in Utah. They were supported in this effort by prominent Church leaders, including Brigham Young. The society held a state fair each year in Salt Lake City, and later one in St. George, where pioneers could display the products of their gardens and win prizes in many categories.<sup>22</sup>

Church leaders sometimes took a more official role in distributing plants and gardening advice throughout the territory. These leaders traveled from town to town giving advice on everyday matters like planting fruit trees, maintaining fences, and building homes. Though local leaders and members had some latitude in how they carried out beautification, they were chastised if they did not do it at all. Church leaders also oversaw the distribution of trees and nursery stock in some cases, like that of James Starley, whom Brigham Young sent to start a nursery in Fillmore.<sup>23</sup> This organization accounts in part for the uniformity often seen in areas settled by Mormons, though undoubtedly individual gardens would have expressed the tastes, preferences, and national background of their owners.

Gardening in Utah was a process of trial and error, and settlers were willing to experiment in finding out what would grow in their new home. This attitude toward gardens is exemplified by a quote attributed to Brigham Young: "Let the people . . . build beautiful cities in which may be found . . . every tree, shrub and flower that will flourish in this climate, to make our mountain home a paradise, and our hearts wells of gratitude to the God of Joseph."<sup>24</sup> Some of the plants brought by settlers and missionaries may not have survived in Utah, and some became noxious weeds outside of their natural environments, but others added to the variety available in Utah nurseries and gardens. Settlers sometimes encountered garden plants and foods in Utah that they had never seen before. Such was the case for Elizabeth Barrows, who tried her first tomato when she came to Utah as a child.<sup>25</sup>

Regardless of how settlers obtained plants, they had a lot of options to choose from for their gardens. Individual tastes and needs would have

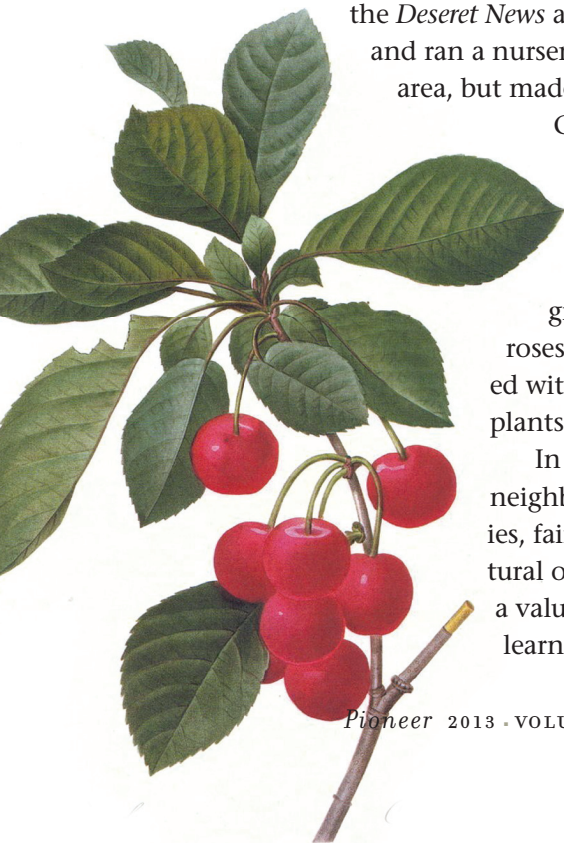




Photo by C. R. Savage, L. Tom Perry Special Collection, Brigham Young University.



## Lombardy poplar

was used so frequently as a windbreak around Utah homes and fields that many people have come to associate it with the Mormon landscape.

created differences in gardens, but some generalizations can be made about what the pioneers grew. Brigham Young's directive that Mormon settlers should be self-sufficient meant that most homes were surrounded by a number of fruiting plants. In fact, one visitor from the eastern United States said that Mormon villages looked like large orchards with houses placed in them here and there. She described one village as being "buried in fruit-trees."<sup>26</sup>

Apples were very popular in pioneer era Utah, along with peaches, plums, pears, and other fruit trees. Fruiting bushes such as currants, elderberries, and serviceberries were also common. Vines, especially hops and grapes, were frequently mentioned in accounts and descriptions of gardens. Some of the fruit trees grown by pioneers were known cultivars, such as Northern Spy apples or Green Gage plums, which are still





available today, but pioneers also grew trees from seeds and pits, introducing their own varieties of fruit not available elsewhere. Shade trees were important features of the landscape because they protected homes from the hot summer sun. Some common shade trees include cottonwood, black locust, and honey locust. These are all hardy, fast-growing trees, which probably explains much of their appeal. Lombardy poplar was used so frequently as a windbreak around Utah homes and fields that many people have come to associate it with the Mormon landscape.<sup>27</sup>

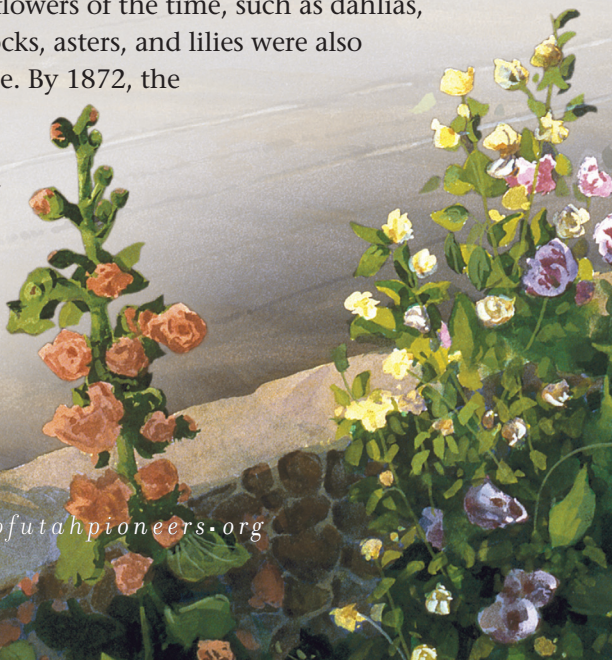
Traditional kitchen gardens were well stocked with plants for eating and other practical purposes. There are few records describing what vegetable gardens looked like—they simply were not very remarkable—but occasional comments in letters and travel narratives suggest they may have been in the old-fashioned style of square boxes or beds separated by paths.<sup>28</sup> Nevertheless, seed catalogs and descriptions of meals provide an idea of what might have grown in these gardens. Greens, carrots, peas, turnips, potatoes, onions, and cabbage were staples in the pioneer diet. Squash and melons also seem to have been an important feature of most vegetable gardens, and tomatoes were common as well. Corn and wheat were the most frequently grown grains. Beets were often grown for producing sugar, as were imphee and sorghum.

The garden could also supply medicinal plants. Isolated settlements were often far from the reach of a doctor, and Church leaders and members sometimes expressed wariness about doctors of the time, perhaps with good reason.<sup>29</sup> Many settlers, especially women, knew or learned how to find and use medicinal plants in their gardens, including sage, lobelia, castor oil, onion, elderberry, grapes, aspen bark, and saffron.<sup>30</sup> Though modern medical knowledge

suggests that not all of these remedies were effective, or even safe, the settlers were using the knowledge of the time to treat their illnesses and injuries. Pioneers also grew madder and indigo, which were sources for red and blue dyes, and yucca, whose roots could be used to make a type of soap.<sup>31</sup>

In addition to these practical plants, ornamental flora made up an important part of the gardens surrounding Utah homes. Pioneers grew many bulbs, annuals, and perennials, though there is not much evidence of tender annuals used for bedding displays in front of homes, which were popular elsewhere during the 19th century. While some settlers eventually may have built the greenhouses necessary for this practice, evidence from the sources indicates that most people grew more hardy ornamentals.

With the exception of tender annuals, the plants popular in Utah gardens generally reflect 19th-century garden trends. British traveler Sir Richard Burton, who visited Salt Lake City, said, "The flowers were principally those of the Old Country—the red French bean, the rose, the geranium, and the single pink; the ground or winter cherry was common; so were nasturtiums; and we saw tansy, but not . . . mint."<sup>32</sup> According to Mrs. John D. Spencer, a daughter of Brigham Young, old clove pinks lined the paths at the Beehive House, and the yard contained lilacs, old roses, red "pinney" [peony] flowers, and other shrubs, flowers, fruit trees, and vines.<sup>33</sup> Some of the most common Mormon pioneer flowers seem to have been roses, peonies, various pinks, and geraniums, though other popular flowers of the time, such as dahlias, phlox, hollyhocks, asters, and lilies were also widely available. By 1872, the Deseret Agricultural and Manufacturing Society offered prizes at the Utah State Fair for roses, china





asters, balsams, verbenas, delphiniums, peonies, lilies, tulips, phlox, chrysanthemums, and hollyhocks.<sup>34</sup>

Roses were a favorite of pioneer settlers. The biblical prophecy that the desert would “blossom as the rose” (Isaiah 35:1) was repeated often, and many Mormon pioneers saw their gardens in Utah as a fulfillment of that prophecy. Some settlers transplanted wild roses to the front of their homes, but cultivated roses were quickly introduced to Utah. According to Sarah Rich’s autobiography, she got the first tame rose to bloom in the Salt Lake Valley from a cutting her husband sent her from California around 1851.<sup>35</sup> She grafted this rose into a wild rose she had already planted by her door. In addition to roses that settlers brought with them, the commerce between nurseries in Utah and California meant that even the very latest roses were soon available in Utah. Hybrid perpetual and Bourbon roses enjoyed their heyday during this time, and Harison’s Yellow, a bright yellow rose popular among pioneers for its hardiness, still grows in fields, foothills, and around abandoned homes in Utah as a testament to the settlers’ fondness for roses.

Regardless of what type they were, plants surrounded most early Utah homes, not only for food and medicine, but also for beauty. Most Mormon settlements looked like oases in the desert or orchards interspersed with homes. This was a necessity, especially in the early years when Utah was

isolated, but it also provided recreation and pleasure for the settlers and a way for them to physically express their commitment to building the kingdom of God, making their homes in the Utah Territory places that were pleasant as well as practical. ▣

## Elizabeth Payne Hobbley

.....  
carried a rose in  
a teapot all the  
way from Eng-  
land to Utah, while  
Edward Whiting  
brought peonies  
and roses across  
the plains.



Artwork by Al Rounds



1 Brigham Young, "Sermons," 1872, reprinted in *Among the Mormons: Historic Accounts by Contemporary Observers*, ed. William Mulder and A. Russell Mortensen, 344–347, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1958), 389.

2 Edward Hunter, "Report of the board of directors of the Deseret Agricultural and Manufacturing Society on the exhibition of 1860," *Deseret News*, October 17, 1860.

3 "Early garden advice of great leader is recounted," *Deseret News*, March 5, 1938.

4 Elizabeth Wells Randall Cumming, "Letters of Elizabeth Cumming," in *Among the Mormons: Historic accounts by contemporary observers*, ed. William Mulder and A. Russell Mortensen, 302–315, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1958), 309.

5 Hazel D. Moyle, "Early pioneer gardens brought astonishment to Utah visitors," *Deseret News*, December 14, 1940.

6 Charles Lowell Walker, *Diary of Charles Lowell Walker*, Vol. 1, ed. A. Karl Larson and Katharine Miles Larson (Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 1980), 161–168, 193, 233; Brigham Young, "Comprehensiveness of true religion—The Saints but Stewarts," in *Journal of Discourses*, 1853, ed. Orson Pratt, 1:334–341. Facsimile of the First Edition, (Salt Lake City, UT, 1966), 335.

7 Elizabeth Wood Kane, "Twelve Mormon Homes Visited in succession on a Journey through Utah to Arizona," *Utah, The Mormons, and the West* (Salt Lake City, UT: Tanner Trust Fund, Univ. of Utah Library, 1974), 4:68.

## William Carter Staines

by Ronald W. Andersen

During the first years of his residence here, William Carter Staines engaged in various avocations. As an expert gardener, Staines not only cultivated fruits and flowers upon his own premises, but superintended at one time the gardens and orchards of President Brigham Young. He also had a farm of 300 acres in Davis County.

Staines was 36 years of age when he married Lillias Thompson Lyon on October 30, 1854, and began building his impressive home a block north of where the Utah Jazz play their basketball games. Negotiations for the settlement of the Utah War took place there between new Governor Alfred Cummings and replaced Governor Brigham Young. Sir Richard Burton, author of *City of the Saints*, was entertained there in 1860 and portrayed Staines as a Horatio Alger-like character, a poor man who became rich in America through effort.

Thomas L. Kane also spent time there. The home was later sold to William Jennings, Utah's first Mormon millionaire, owner of the Eagle Emporium on Main Street. Jennings made extensive additions to the home in the 1870s and named it Devereaux House, after the area of England where he grew up.

Staines's connection with the Deseret Agricultural and Mining Society began when it was incorporated in January 1856. His interest and success in fruit culture is partly indicated by the fact that on one occasion, September 18, 1857, he had upon his table from his own

orchards six kinds of peaches, some of them measuring nearly 10 inches in circumference; also grapes of his own raising.

As a purveyor of fruits and vegetables, Staines was well known in the city, and in 1857 was a partner with David Candland in Candland's saloon (restaurant) on Main Street, just south of the Council House. ▣

Block 84, north side of South Temple.



Photos from Utah State Historical Society.





8 Walker, 254–255.

9 Brigham Young, “General Epistle,” reprinted in *Handcarts to Zion: The Story of a Unique Western Migration 1856–1860 with Contemporary Journals, Accounts, Reports; and Rosters of Members of the Ten Handcart Companies*, ed. LeRoy Hafen and Ann Hafen, Pioneers Edition (Glendale, CA: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1960), 22.

10 Hazel D. Moyle, “Lovely Utah flowers a pioneer bequest,” *Deseret News*, December 19, 1948.

11 Ibid; “Her flowers spread happiness,” *Deseret News*, December 5, 1948.

12 Kane, 86.

13 Elaine Jarvik, “Roots: Salt Lake’s oldest trees,” *Deseret News*, April 28, 1985.

14 Mary Ann Hafen, *Recollections of a Handcart Pioneer of 1860: A Woman’s Life on the Mormon Frontier*, Bison Books Edition (Lincoln and London: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 2004), 21, 34.

15 Esther Truitt, “Home gardening on city lots in the Salt Lake Valley, 1847–1918,” master’s thesis, (Univ. of Connecticut, 1986), 23.

16 Thomas Christopher, *In Search of Lost Roses* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1989), 162.

17 Moyle, “Early pioneer gardens.”

18 Walker, 169.

19 Joseph Ellis Johnson, “Culture of fruits and flowers,” *Deseret News*, April 15, 1863.

20 Sarah DeArmon Pea Rich, “Autobiography,” 1885, Church Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, UT, MS 1543 folder 2, 79–80.

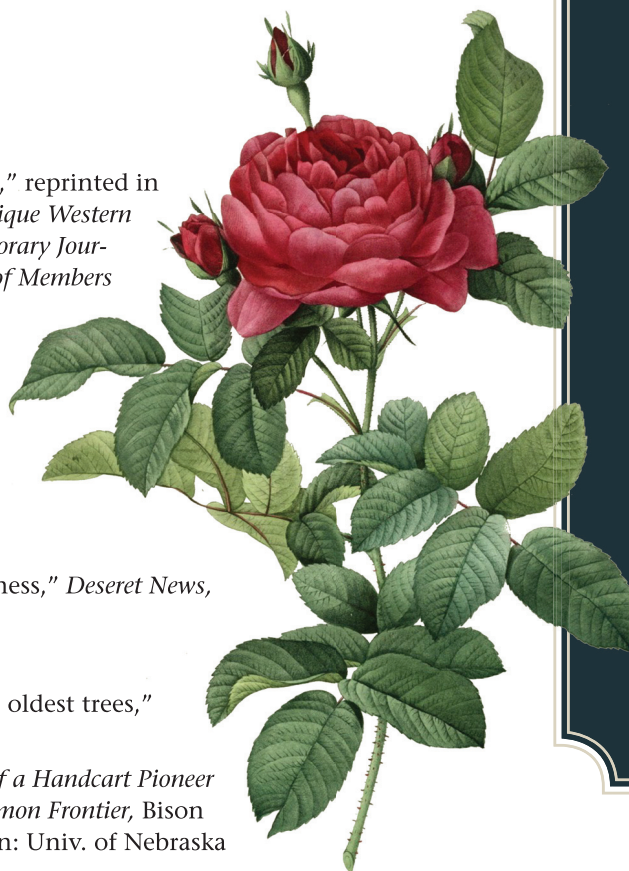
21 Joseph Ellis Johnson, 1868–1872. Account and garden books, Book 9, 1868–1872. Annie Clark Tanner Western Americana Collection. Univ. of Utah Libraries Special Collections Dept. Salt Lake City, UT.

22 Deseret Agricultural and Manufacturing Society, “Minute Book,” 1863–1874, Utah State Archives, Salt Lake City, UT, Series 59925.

23 Richard G. Francaviglia, *The Mormon Landscape: Existence, Creation, and Perception of a Unique Image in the American West* (New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1978), 84–89.

24 *Deseret News*, “Early garden advice.”

25 Elizabeth Emma Brewer Barrows, Pioneer Personal History Interview by Alice G. Mitchell, May 26, 1938, Works Progress Administration Pioneer Personal History



Mormon pioneer flowers seem to have been roses, peonies, various pinks, and geraniums, though other popular flowers of the time, such as dahlias, phlox, hollyhocks, asters, and lilies were also widely available.

Collection, Utah State Univ. Archives, Logan, UT, MS COLL 18 Box 1 Folder16.

26 Kane 7,62.

27 Wallace Stegner, *Mormon Country* (Lincoln, NE: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1981).

28 Kane, 111; Sir Richard Burton, *The City of the Saints and Across the Rocky Mountains to California*, 1862, excerpt reprinted in *Among the Mormons: Historic Accounts by Contemporary Observers*, ed. William Mulder and A. Russell Mortensen, 328–334. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1958), 331.

29 Walker, 185.

30 Hafen, 48; Hyrum Allen, Pioneer Personal History Interview by Winford Bunce, January 28, 1937, Works Progress Administration Pioneer Personal History Collection, Utah State Univ. Archives, Logan, UT, MS COLL 18 Box 1 Folder 4; Martha Spence Heywood, *Not by Bread Alone: The Journal of Martha Spence Heywood*, 1850–56, Ed. Juanita Brooks (Salt Lake City: Utah State Historical Society, 1978), 116–117.

31 Hafen, 41.

32 Burton, 331.

33 *Deseret News*, “Early garden advice.”

34 Deseret Agricultural and Manufacturing Society Minute Book.

35 Rich, 79.





## Pioneer Vignettes

### A Bird's-eye View of . . . St. George

**T**homas L. Kane was an attorney, abolitionist, and Union Army general from Pennsylvania. He came to know the Saints through a conference held in Philadelphia in May 1846. He was impressed by their stance against slavery and took on the role of assisting them in their journey west. He offered advice and assistance and used his many military and political connections to help the Mormon refugees find safe travel and shelter along their way.

Kane and Brigham Young became close friends and stayed in contact for many years. Kane visited Utah regularly through the years and

continued to provide counsel and support to the Saints. He advised them in matters of business and government, particularly in interactions with the federal government. After the completion of the railroad in Utah, Brigham Young invited Thomas Kane and his family to visit: "General, now that the Atlantic and Pacific Railroad is completed and the facilities for traveling have made the trip across the plains comparatively a pleasure, may we hope to see you here soon? Let me assure you there is not one among the

thousands who will cross the plains this season to whom the Latter-day Saints would more cordially extend the hand of warm welcome. Those who know you cherish for you the fondest recollection, while with all, your name is held in honorable remembrance" (April 16, 1871). Kane and his family, including his wife, Elizabeth, and two sons, visited Utah in the winter of 1872. They traveled throughout the territory and stayed in Brigham's Young winter home in St. George. During that time, Kane and Young worked together to lay out plans for additional Mormon settlements in the area south.





Elizabeth Kane wrote to her family while she was in Utah, and her father later published her letters in the book *Twelve Mormon Homes*. Elizabeth's journal from that time was later published as *Elizabeth Kane's St. George Journal*. Her writings offered a keen insight into the daily life, homes, and gardens of Utah Mormons in the 1870s.

### Elizabeth Kane's Photographic Eye

by Lowell C. Bennion

Coming from England and Pennsylvania, Mrs. Kane viewed the Mormon villages she saw with Eastern eyes and described them differently than inside observers like George A. Smith. En route to Provo, after her party stopped in American Fork to water the horses and taste Bishop Harrington's "delicious apples," she drew this concise comparison with her Pennsylvania towns. "These Mormon villages have such wide streets and every house is so set about with trees that they look like a bouquet arranged by an artist in a vase, each spray of flower and leaf disposed to show its beauties instead of the close-set masses of the florist. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

"The 'streets,'" . . . [Mrs. Kane] wrote, "are smoothly graded wide lanes, water murmurs along the edges of all the side paths, which are overhung with trees; vineyards and orchards surround the houses. . . . At sunset we heard the cowherd's long tin horn, and went out [of the Snows' Big House, where they lodged] to see the Town troop of cows come home. The great drove halted in the central square, and

then each cow walked slowly toward her owner's home. The people were throwing open the doors of sheds, and [the] gates of little paddocks in which the milky mothers were to spend the night." On Sunday afternoon no cows were around. "The Plaza and the Tithing Yard were filled with wagons when we emerged [from the Tabernacle], and nothing could be more [like] Bucks County [Pennsylvania] than the conduct and appearance of the respectable farmer-folk . . . as they took their [wagon] seats and exchanged cordial greetings before dispersing."<sup>2</sup>

Elizabeth Kane, only 36 years old at the time, loved to wander through town with her husband and/or their two young sons (ages 9 and 11). . . .

"An old man joined us . . . as we passed a cottage which, but for its wide vine shaded piazza [porch] would have looked thoroughly English with its whitewashed rough-stone walls and deepset casement windows. . . . An old squaw now came forward bending under a heavy load of the yucca root, which they use here for soap. She turned aside, entering a gate in the wattle fence of a garden across the road. A very small adobe cottage stood in the midst of it, of which the old man who was talking to K. [Elizabeth's reference to Tom] proved to be the owner. He bade us come in and showed us that he had a fine vineyard, a beautiful peach orchard and a few pomegranate almond and fig trees. He is a Southerner,



Elizabeth Kane

and was glad to revive his memories of Alabama in chatting over old times to K [a Civil War veteran]."<sup>3</sup>

Since the St.

George census-taker in 1870 counted just four Alabama-born residents, only one of whom—at age 48—could be considered

old, we can safely conclude that the man with whom they chatted was John M. Moody, a farmer and one-time member of the City Council. His "little fertile oasis," as Mrs. Kane would have termed it, included a second home for two of his three wives and all of his ten at-home children, judging by the census listing of two separate households. . . .

On a weekday morning, the Kanes started out for "the top of the [Black Bench] mesa" but were soon stopped by Mrs. Lucy Young, Brigham's St. George wife (or "Big-ham Squaw," as the Paiutes called her), who insisted on showing the boys how she watered her yard. . . .

"At this time of year there is no limit to the time allowed for watering, but later, when the crops start, each lot has but three hours in the twenty-four assigned to it. . . . She has three, one of which is allowed to remain uncultivated, so that she has nine hours water time for the two lots. . . . Her garden is the best looking in the village. . . . From the acequia in the street, which runs very rapidly there are two troughs made of boards which traverse her lots. . . . At intervals there are 'gates' in the sides of the troughs





Members of the Gardeners' Club in front of J. E. Johnson's Drug Store in 1870s.

. . . acting as valves which are kept closed by the pressure of the water."

Mrs. Lucy then showed the Kanes her grape arbour. "One long trellis runs back some distance from the house, and she had several thousand vine-cuttings in a bed ready to set out. She means to have a 'pleached [plaited or interlaced] alley' all round the lot." In addition, her "wee Estate is planted with thriving peach, plum apricot and apple trees. Then she has another part set out with Luzerne that yields six crops a year." What made Mrs. Lucy's garden such a model for the village besides the fact that she had an English gardener to assist her? Her husband had bought the lot from a prominent merchant named Joseph Birch, who had hauled in "One thousand cart loads of sand, and two thousand of earth . . . to make the rich loam I [Elizabeth] saw, and fill up 'the slough.'" Then the lot "was under-

drained in every direction to carry off the water charged with 'mineral' that percolated through it. . . . She [Lucy] showed us a deep ditch running towards the Clara, carrying off the outflow from her lots. Into it the smaller drains discharged."<sup>4</sup> . . .

On the evening of their visit with Mrs. Lucy, the Kanes attended the Annual Festival of the St. George Gardeners' Club, held in the club's building on the same block that showcased another of the town's most striking gardens—that of the group's founder and president. Elizabeth was "amused by the number of countrywomen to whom I [she] was introduced." The club "being composed of genuine practical gardeners, not dilettanti [dilettantes], of course the Scotch love of the art showed itself by their being present in force." The tables and even "the deep window recesses of the room" were covered or piled high "with the products of

Dixie. . . . " "There were grapes gathered today [Jan. 21]—having been sheltered by dampened matting; and grapes gathered in the autumn, a little dried but deliciously sweet." Moreover, "There were several bottles of grape wine," but placed there only as a courtesy to her husband, she assumed, for "the healths were all drunk in fair water." The crowd cheered the final toast to "The health of the people of St. George. May their cellars be full of wine, their barns full of plenty, their hearts full of freedom and their cradles full of babies!"<sup>5</sup>

In spite of the presence of a fair number of Scots, including Elizabeth's good friends, the so-called "McDiarmids," the town's leading horticulturists were New Yorkers. Club President Joseph E. Johnson had moved to Dixie on his own initiative from an impressive Spring Lake Villa in Utah Valley because of his interest in raising more exotic plants than the northern climate allowed. ▣

*Excerpts from The Juanita Brooks Lecture Series: The 23rd Annual Lecture, "A Bird's-eye View of Erasmus Snow's St. George," by Lowell C. Bennion. St. George Tabernacle, March 22, 2006.*

1 Mary Karen Bowen Solomon's "Profile of Elizabeth Kane," in *A Gentile Account*, 4–5, 22, 32.

2 *Ibid.*, 4–5, 22, 32.

3 *Ibid.*, 56–57.

4 *Ibid.*, 96–98.

5 *Ibid.*, 114–16.

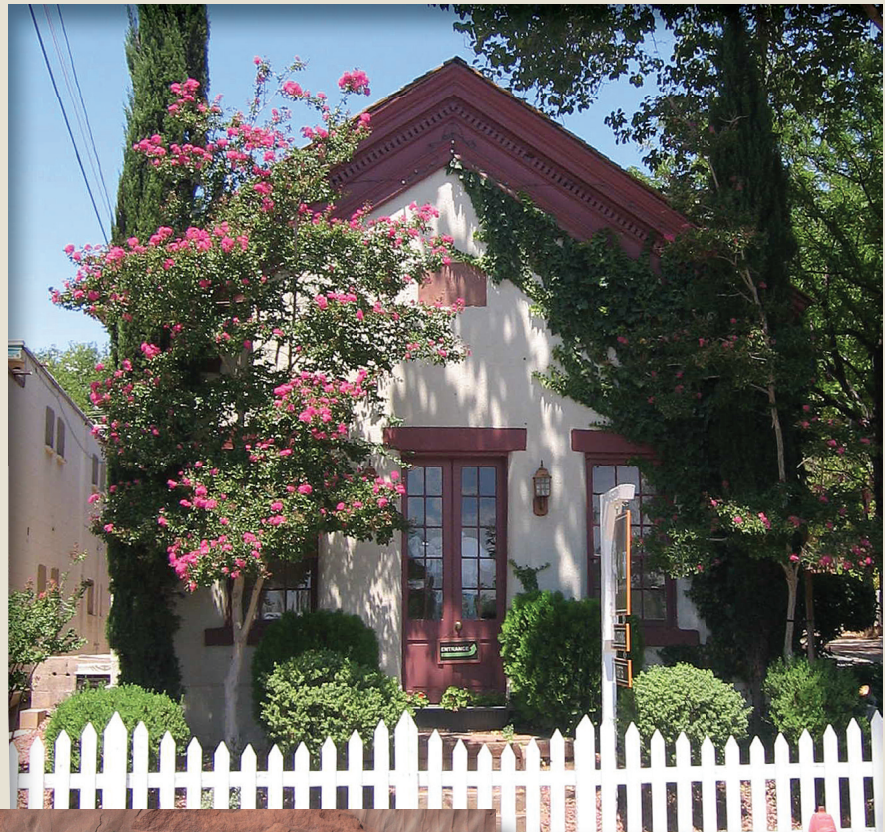
*Photo from Lynne Clark Collection, Agnes S. Pickett & Orpha Morris. See [http://library.dixie.edu/special\\_collections/Juanita\\_Brooks\\_lectures/2006\\_-\\_A\\_Birds-Eye\\_View.html](http://library.dixie.edu/special_collections/Juanita_Brooks_lectures/2006_-_A_Birds-Eye_View.html)*

*Background artwork by Roland Lee.*



## Gardeners' Club Hall Marker

**B**uilt just five years after St. George was settled, the Gardeners' Club Hall is considered to be the oldest public building standing in the city. This small, unassuming adobe building predates the courthouse, the tabernacle, and the temple by several years. Located across the street north and a half block west of [the marker], the one-room structure was built in 1867 as the meeting place for the Gardeners' Club, an organization formed to promote the growing of fruit trees, shrubs and flowers. The Gardeners' Club was organized in 1865; Joseph E. Johnson, the club's first president, was a powerful force in the development of horticulture and floraculture in Dixie. In his newspaper, *The Pomologist*, he passed on to the public his extensive knowledge of horticulture. He also demonstrated that knowledge on his own St. George property, which included most of the block on which the Gardeners' Club Hall and the Brigham Young Home stand. There he created a veritable "Eden" in the desert, cultivating trees, vines, and flowers and operating his nursery business. Through the Gardeners' Club, Joseph Johnson, along with other horticulture experts such as Walter E. Dodge and Luther Hemenway, spearheaded a movement that went forward until the Dixie area



abounded in lovely orchards, vineyards, and gardens. In addition to being a meetinghouse and social gathering place, the Gardeners' Club Hall was the site of early horticulture exhibits, displaying the many varieties of fruits, vegetables, and other plants that could be grown in Dixie." 🏠



The marker was placed by the Cotton Mission Chapter, Sons of Utah Pioneers in Heritage Plaza in St. George in 1994 (48 E St. George Blvd.). The actual Gardeners' Club Hall is about two blocks away.

Photos and information at [www.waymarking.com/waymarks/WM4Z0M\\_Gardeners\\_Club\\_Hall\\_St\\_George\\_Utah](http://www.waymarking.com/waymarks/WM4Z0M_Gardeners_Club_Hall_St_George_Utah)





# *Forgotten Skills of* **Pioneer Gardening**

*Artwork by Valoy Eaton*

*Pioneer* 2013 • VOLUME 60 • NUMBER 2

**16**

[www.sonsofuthapioneers.org](http://www.sonsofuthapioneers.org)





BY CALEB WARNOCK

Our pioneer ancestors would recognize little of the techniques and methods used in today's backyard gardens—and they would be puzzled by why so few families garden and spend so much money when they do.

Let's begin with the soil itself. Pioneers did not need commercial fertilizer. The soil was new, meaning it had never been mechanically disturbed. Soil health is almost entirely dependent on something called mushroom mycelium, which is a mass of thread-like branches running underground. These branches fruit by producing mushrooms. Mycelium is what allows the roots of vegetables to absorb phosphorus, nitrogen, potassium, calcium, and dozens of trace nutrients necessary for healthy plants. Today's farms and gardens are deeply tilled as a method of weed control, and this process destroys the mycelium. Soil without mycelium is dependent on commercial fertilizers that have been chemically designed for plants to absorb without the aid of mycelium. The pioneers would likely marvel that we spend money to rototill our backyard gardens, which then forces us to spend more money on commercial fertilizer. The pioneers did not use chemicals of any kind.

The gardeners of pioneer times faced fewer garden pests than we do today because many of the pests we face are not native but have been accidentally imported. Their gardens were also more spread out, leaving them less vulnerable to disease and crop-specific bugs that thrive when gardens are crowded.

They did have pests—Mormon crickets are a famous example. Chickens were a primary defense, and “chicken moats” are still a mainstay concept for organic gardeners today. Building a chicken moat simply means fencing off a garden square and then allowing the chickens to run in a larger square around or near the garden. This way the chickens cannot get into the garden, but they can eat any bugs or pests. This method works remarkably well. It also makes it easy to feed garden trimmings to the chickens.





rally mix with chicken manure, are almost pure nitrogen. Backyard chickens were a symbiotic source of backyard food, providing eggs and protein along with a steady supply of soil-enriching manure. Pioneer chickens were fed little, if anything, when the land was not covered with snow. If given access to grass and weeds, chickens will more or less feed themselves. No part of backyard animals was wasted. Animal blood was used to enrich the soil, as were bones. “Cracked bones,” sold by the barrel, were advertised as a premier fertilizer

Pioneer families faced fewer weeds because many of the things we consider to be weeds they considered to be wild or medicinal edibles—mallow, comfrey, lambsquarters, dandelions, purslane, and more. Many of our modern weed plagues had not yet been accidentally let loose upon the land—they did not battle cheatgrass or bindweed, for example. In addition, weeds are often rampant in modern gardens because of tilling. This may seem counterintuitive, but modern science has affirmed that native soils contain a natural “seed bank” in which seed stays dormant for decades. Turning the soil brings banked seeds to the surface, where they sprout in the warmth and light. Without tractors and tillers, the pioneers disturbed the soil much less than we do today, which helped keep down weed growth.

Pioneers used “leaf mould”—composted leaves—as a top dressing, as a seed-starting medium, and to create raised beds in densely clay soils or enrich naturally weak native soils. Animal manures were abundant. Allowing those manures to decompose turns them into a nutrient-rich soil that has been used for hundreds of years. Both leafy and animal manures heaped into piles become hot as they decompose. These hot manures were used for winter pit gardening, heaped around cold frames and cloches to keep starving mice and voles from eating the winter harvest. Chicken manures are rich in nitrogen because chicken feathers, which natu-

ally mix with chicken manure, are almost pure nitrogen. Backyard chickens were a symbiotic source of backyard food, providing eggs and protein along with a steady supply of soil-enriching manure. Pioneer chickens were fed little, if anything, when the land was not covered with snow. If given access to grass and weeds, chickens will more or less feed themselves. No part of backyard animals was wasted. Animal blood was used to enrich the soil, as were bones. “Cracked bones,” sold by the barrel, were advertised as a premier fertilizer

even up to World War I in newspapers and garden magazines.

Garden seed has changed dramatically since pioneer times. The vast majority of seeds available to the public today are hybrids, which are patented and corporately owned. The 20th century was the first time when seeds were legally owned by corporate entities. In pioneer times, seeds were saved from the backyard garden and actively traded, bartered, and gifted. Less often they were sold. Backyard seed-saving was widely understood and almost universally practiced. Seeds were usually purchased only when the gardener could be sold on the idea that the seller’s seed had some strategic new benefit—and even in those cases, the pioneer gardener would have planned to purchase only once, saving their own seed from that variety afterward. Purchasing seeds each year would have been considered spendthrift. Vegetables that produce true seed at home are called open-pollinated. In pioneer times, open-pollinated seed was the only kind that existed. Today almost all seed is hybrid or genetically modified. Sadly, 94% of the varieties of garden seed that were available in catalogs in the U.S. in 1903 are now extinct. A network of gardeners around the nation is currently trying to save the last of the open-pollinated seed, much of which is on the verge of extinction. Open-pollinated vegetables must be isolated while flowering to be kept pure. The pioneers, who had more open space than most



families today, used isolation by distance to keep their seed pure. They were also much more likely to grow single varieties of vegetables than modern backyard gardeners. Squashes, which are notoriously promiscuous, were hand-pollinated for purity in pioneer times as necessary, using muslin fabric to keep insects from reaching the squash blossoms.

**F**orcing vegetables was critical to pioneer gardeners, who did not have the luxury of modern grocery stores. In truth, pioneer families forced vegetables in winter to provide themselves with fresh food. They grew “night vegetables” in their root cellars by forcing the greens of chicory, beets, and dandelions in the dark. Today few families practice this age-old method.

The pioneers were familiar with vegetable forcing varieties that are extremely rare today, such as Amsterdam forcing carrots, Parisienne carrots, winter lettuces, rutabaga, and perennial onions, to name a few. Glass bell jars called cloches and glass houses quickly became common in Utah after the pioneers established themselves, just as they had been for centuries in Europe. The first documented use of a greenhouse was recorded in the first century by Emperor Tiberius of Rome, who had his servants use sheets of

mineral mica to force cucumbers—the emperor’s favorite—in winter. Plate-glass greenhouses were used in Rome about A.D. 500 and quickly spread across the civilized world. In pioneer times, millions of glass bell jars were used in the U.S. and Europe to force the food used to feed cities and families, along with millions of what they called “sashes,” wooden frames covered in plate glass used for winter growing. Today, forcing for true year-round eating is almost a lost art. That trend is beginning to change, though, due to concerns about the economy, commercial food safety, and self-sufficiency.

**R**oot storage was the last vestige of pioneer gardening methods to be dropped in the U.S. In past eras, life without a root cellar was almost unthinkable. Row upon row of summer’s bounty was preserved in glass canning jars for winter consumption, along with crocks of pickles and bins of onions, potatoes, carrots, parsnips, and more. Canning food was not a technique widely used by the pioneers but became popular at the end of the 19th century. Pioneers used cellars dug well below the frost line to create a cave-like space, maintaining a constant above-freezing temperature during winter. Dirt floors allowed the heat of the earth to rise up, and the native moisture of the soil provided the humidity necessary to preserve roots.

Vegetables were stored “dirt-on,” which allows certain enzymes in the soil to help preserve the carrots, potatoes, and other food. The pioneers knew from experience that roots that were washed before cellar-ing spoiled much faster.

It is also interesting to note that so-called “baking eggs” or “cooking eggs” were stored in root cellars in winter and sawdust-packed ice houses in summer.

Just like roots, eggs that are not washed will keep fresh much longer in storage. This is because each egg has 6,000 microscopic pores that are sealed by a natural coating when they are laid by the hen. Once an egg is washed, that coating is removed and the egg begins to spoil unless refrigerated. The pioneers stored unwashed eggs for baking and





for winter selling and trading. Eggs were sometimes preserved using the “butter” method, which meant taking them from the hen while they were still warm and coating them with butter before putting them in storage. Before modern grocery stores, so-called “baking eggs” were a precious commodity, especially in winter.

Refrigerated eggs, self-suiciding hybrid seeds, petroleum-based fertilizers, chemical pesticides and herbicides—and all the money we spend on them—

would simply be unrecognizable to our pioneer ancestors. Spending hard-won cash at the grocery store while foregoing a family garden would have been unthinkable to those who were the first to make the Utah desert blossom with food and flowers. ❏

Caleb Warnock is the author of *Forgotten Skills of Self-Sufficiency Used by the Mormon Pioneers* as well as *The Art of Baking with Natural Yeast* and *Backyard Winter Gardening: Vegetables Fresh & Simple in Any Climate without Artificial Heat or Electricity*. For information about Caleb’s work to save pioneer seeds, visit [SeedRenaissance.com](http://SeedRenaissance.com).



## Thomas Fenton, by Ronald W. Andersen

**T**he Fentons rented part of a house in the Fifteenth Ward, but in 1852 they purchased a house and lot in the Sixth Ward. In 1856

they moved to Ogden, intending to settle there, but after buying a house and two lots in that city and finding themselves unable to purchase farming land in the vicinity, they returned in February 1857 to their old home in Salt Lake City. Having purchased two-and-a-half lots close to his home and planted a good fruit orchard, Mr. Fenton next seeded, planted, and established a first-class nursery. Afterwards, as his sons grew old enough to go into business with him, he purchased 30 acres of land a few blocks away for nursery stock and kept his green and hot houses, rose gardens, and so on in the Sixth Ward.

In June 1876, Fenton asked the city council to consider the propriety of introducing the English sparrow for the purpose of exterminating insects destructive to fruit. The petition was referred to the committee on improvements. The petition was evidently approved and the bird, the weaver finch, popularly referred to as the “English sparrow,” was brought to Utah. ❏

Second block from lower left on Block 44, 4th West between 4th and 5th South.

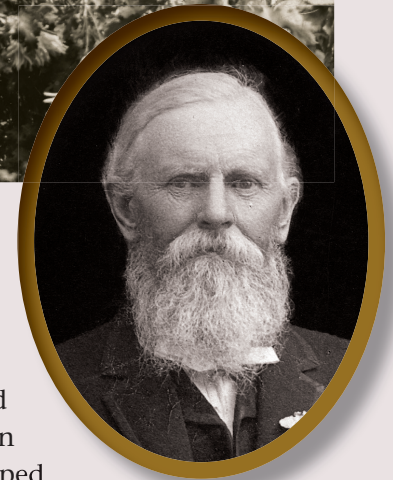






## John Lambert Maxwell

BY SUSAN LOFGREN



Born on October 27, 1837, in Yorkshire, England, John Lambert Maxwell discovered his love for the land early. When he was only 18, he became an apprentice gardener, florist, and nurseryman, and after completing his apprenticeship, he began working on some of the area's largest and most beautiful gardens. In 1859 he exhibited flowers at the Peel Park United Grand Floral Fete and received a prize for the best display in his class. He also earned the appointment of head gardener at the Harris Mansion, one of the largest estates in Yorkshire.

On January 1, 1860, John Lambert was baptized in the ocean. His life history records, "As I rose from the waters of baptism, a white dove hovered over me and seemed to symbolize a feeling of peace." He married Jane Hird on March 6, boarded *The Underwriter* on May 1, and headed for the promised land.

After braving the tossings and turnings of ship life for a month and 12 days, the Lamberts landed in New York. "From there, we started our long trip across the plains," John's history reports. "We had to walk most of the way and suffered as did many others. We were a part of Captain Brown's

Company, which arrived in the Salt Lake Valley on August 9, 1860. We camped at a spot called the Eighth Ward Square."

Shortly after his arrival in the valley, he began working as a gardener for President Brigham Young. He was responsible for a large vegetable garden to the west of the temple, and he also landscaped the Prophet's residence. Later he would design gardens for President John Taylor and other recognized men of the day, such as William Jennings and John Clark.

In 1862, John and his family moved into a home owned by President John Taylor (at South Temple between West Temple and First West), and John began his florist business—one of the first in the valley. He loved spending his time growing gorgeous flowers and luscious fruit and is credited for raising the first head of celery ever grown in Utah (in 1865)—sold for 60 cents a head!

In addition to his florist business, John began experimenting with "hot beds," a venture that became the beginning of his greenhouse work. He



rented one and a quarter acres of additional land, where he experimented with other fruits, vegetables, and flowers. "On this land I planted my first English Damson plums," his history records, "which grew from stones which I carried with me from England. This was the first of this variety ever raised in this country and came to be called the Maxwell Damson."

Colonel R. T. Burton lived nearby and dearly wanted a lawn. However, he feared the grass would never grow because of the lack of water. He discussed the matter with John, who felt sure that a solution could be found. "Grandfather Maxwell had the determination and the faith in himself that this project could be accomplished," reports

his granddaughter-in-law Isabelle Randall Maxwell. "He was told a lawn would not grow because there was no way to sprinkle it [but] through his ingenuity was able to grow a beautiful lawn by watering [it] from an irrigation ditch."

John grew beautiful trees and was one of the first in the area to offer trees for sale. In 1870, a Mr. Wade from Kaysville ordered 174 of his trees for planting in that area. The trees grew well and were beautiful. Some even survive to this day. They made such a difference that John received many more requests for trees. He also furnished the grove of trees at Fort Douglas.

Potatoes were one of his specialties. Samples of his potatoes were sent all over, from Tooele to

## John Reading

by Ronald W. Andersen

**J**ohn Reading joined the Church on July 3, 1853, and married Mary Ann Brown on May 29, 1856. She was nine years his senior and had been a member of the Church for almost 10 years. The year they married, they came in a wagon company to Utah.

John was a horticulturist and set about building a nursery. According to Andrew Jenson, Reading's nurseries and flower gardens consisted of five large greenhouses covered with 7,000 square feet of glass, the most extensive nursery of its kind in Utah at the time.

An advertisement appearing in one of the old Salt Lake City directories read as follows:

JOHN READING  
Nurseryman—Seedman  
Florist—Evergreens—Fruit Trees  
Ornamental Trees  
Full stock of Field, Garden,  
and Flower Seeds  
Bouquets, Wreaths, and  
Crosses for Weddings and  
Funerals—A SPECIALTY

The ubiquitous Lombardy poplar, seen everywhere in Utah, is native to Italy and other Mediterranean countries. John Reading is credited with introducing it into Utah in 1862.

On January 28, 1874, the Horticultural Society of Utah met and discussed the codling moth question. All were of the opinion that a united effort on the part of the owners of orchards in the



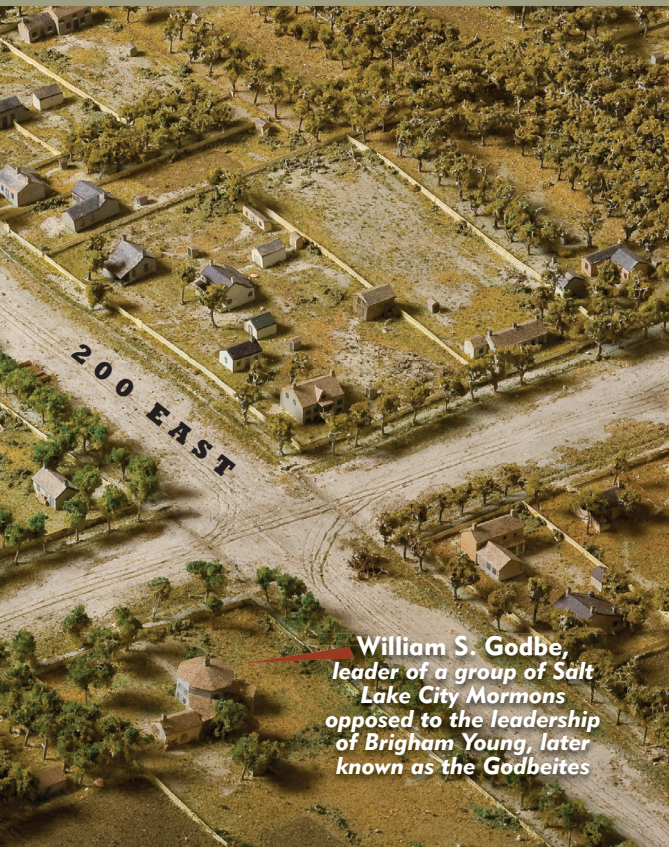




*Left: For 25 years John Lambert Maxwell had a floral establishment at 321 East Fifth South in Salt Lake City and owned a five-acre plot at 3065 South Third East where he grew his nursery stock. For more information, see "John Lambert Maxwell," Pioneer, Autumn 2000, 20.*

infested districts would be necessary in order to destroy or even check the insect. John Reading stated that he was corresponding with gentlemen in the east who were qualified to give information that he would lay before the society as soon as received. ▣

*Block 55*



**William S. Godbe,**  
leader of a group of Salt  
Lake City Mormons  
opposed to the leadership  
of Brigham Young, later  
known as the Godbeites

Summit. An entry in his diary reports that he once grew 180 pounds of potatoes from one pound of seeds, which was received from the East. "It took a little patience," his history points out. "I would cut the sets very small and plant them in [small] boxes in the greenhouse. As they grew, I would split them and transplant them. When they were ready to send up tubers, and reached about 3 inches long, I would take these cuttings off and obtain new roots from them.

"We raised a squash so big it took three men to roll it up a board onto a wagon," his history continues. "Now that sounds like a 'fish story,' but it was true. It took first place at the Territorial Fair that year."

The Deseret Agricultural Society awarded him a diploma for the finest specimens of flowers, and he received numerous medals and prizes for his flowers, fruits, and vegetables for many years."

His diary indicates that he manufactured brooms made from birch limbs and willows (later he raised a broom corn that made even a finer broom), raised sugar cane, and often traded his stock for molasses and other merchandise.

He was a member of the Deseret Militia and served as secretary of the Deseret Agricultural Society. History gives him credit for introducing many new varieties of flowers; the Martha Washington Palagonia is the one he was most proud of.

John Lambert Maxwell died July 28, 1905, after only two days of illness. Many mourned the passing of one who had made such a significant contribution to the beauty of the earth.

"It made me feel good to be a part of the building up the community, to do what I could to make the desert bloom," he reportedly said. "The land was my life. It is my hope that some of my children will learn to love the good earth as I did and gain from it what I gained from it." ▣

*Salt Lake City Model (pp. 20, 22-23, 26) on display at the Church History Museum. For more information, see "Salt Lake City, 1870," Pioneer, vol. 58, no. 3, 2011.*



# The Garden AT Fort Buenaventura

Miles Goodyear was an American fur trader and mountain man who built and occupied Fort Buenaventura in what is now the city of Ogden, Utah. He is credited with being the first recorded man of European descent to live in the Weber Valley of Utah.

Goodyear had a desire to build a “halfway house” on the way to California, a place where travelers could stop, rest, and replenish their supplies. Goodyear settled at the confluence of the Weber and Ogden rivers and built a stockade. It was constructed with cottonwood logs set upright in the ground to enclose about one-half acre of land adjacent to the river. It was begun in 1845 and completed by the end of 1846. Four log cabins occupied the corners of the fort, and sheds, corrals, and a garden were also located within the enclosure. Additional corrals were located on the outside to accommodate cattle, horses, goats, and sheep.<sup>1</sup>

In late September 1845 the *Independence, Missouri Western Expositor* ran an article about Goodyear’s plans for a such a settlement:

“On Tuesday last, a Mountain company under the charge of Miles W. Goodyear left our place. The number with him does not exceed 6 or 8 men. His goods, which were mostly purchased in St. Louis, were taken out on pack animals—as these were considered best and safest to get along among the mountains. He trades most usually with the Snake Indians, and one or two other tribes, who are friendly to the Americans.

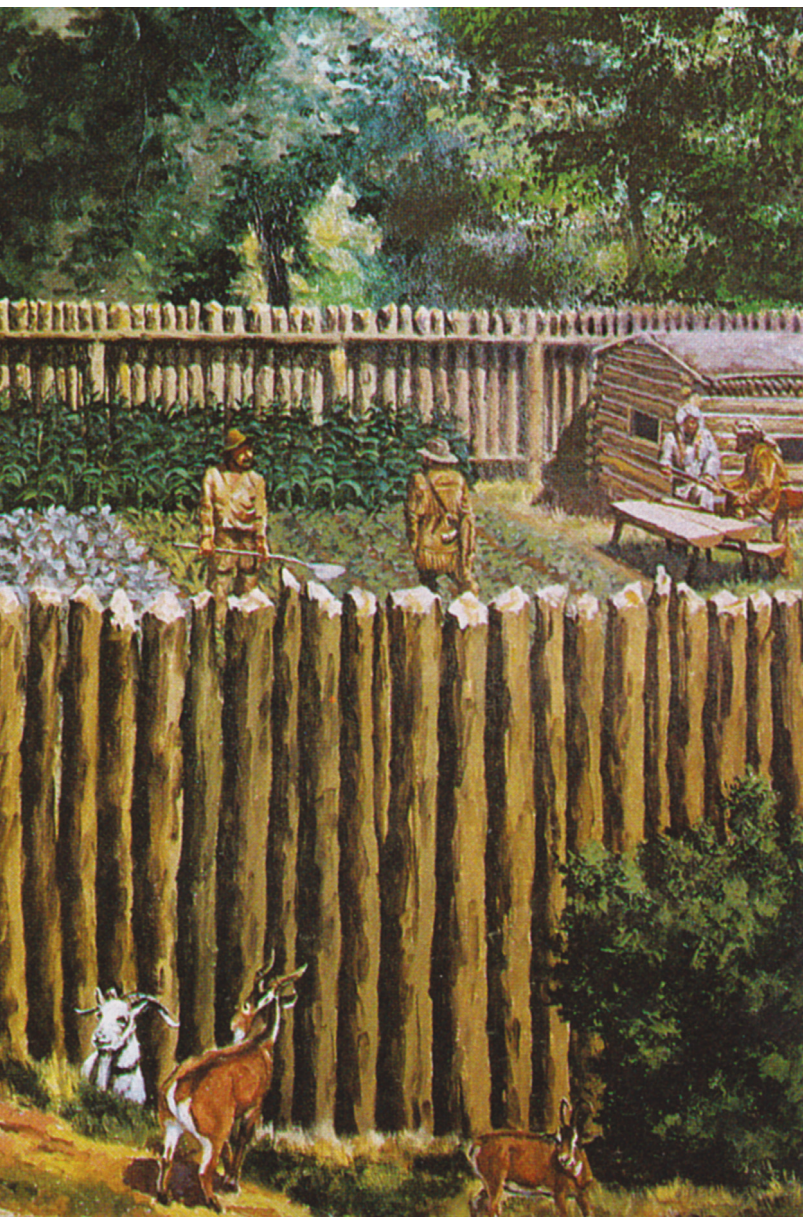
“During his stay on the plains he purposes building a kind of fort and cultivating a portion



Artwork by Farrell R. Collett

of ground, more as an experiment than anything else, and if possible make it a sort of half way house between this and Oregon and California, where the companies may stop and refresh themselves, and obtain supplies, for he expects to have the coming summer all kinds of vegetables, and plenty of Indian corn and wheat, which they may ground up or grind into flour and meal. It is his intention upon his return to the States in a year or two, to bring in with him all kinds of flower seed and rare shrubbery that the prairies may furnish as well as everything in the curious line of the animal, vegetable or mineral kingdom—success to him.”<sup>2</sup>





When the Mormon pioneers began arriving in the valley of the Great Salt Lake, they became aware of the Goodyear settlement north of them. Later, in a discourse at Wellsville, Utah, on June 7, 1860, Brigham Young remarked: "A man named Welles, living with Miles Goodyear, where now is Ogden City, had [in 1847] a few beans growing, and carried water from the river in a pail to irrigate them."<sup>3</sup>

The story of this Welles and his garden in Ogden City is written in *Miles Goodyear and the Founding of Ogden* by historian Dale L. Morgan. Morgan writes, as follows:

"The Saints were establishing themselves in Salt Lake Valley. By July 28 they had definitely fixed upon the site of Salt Lake City as their gathering place, but they had a large curiosity about the surrounding region, and particularly about the country north where a farm of some kind had been started. John Brown writes that on August 8 he 'started north with a little exploring company; also in company with Capt. Jas. Brown and others who were on their way to California. At Weber River we found the fort of Mr. Goodyear, which consisted of some log buildings and corrals stockaded in with pickets. This man had a herd of cattle, horses and goats. He had a small garden of vegetables, also a few stalks of corn, and, although it had been neglected, it looked well, which proved to us that with proper cultivation it would do well.'

"The state of the Goodyear garden was a matter of the greatest interest to the Mormon Pioneers, and it is hardly surprising that their journals should be full of information about it. One of the diaries reports that the garden included corn in tassel which had been planted June 9, that beans were ripe, carrots a foot long, cabbages, radishes, etc., looking fine. Another journal records that the American corn was shoulder high and the Spanish corn tasseling out; yet another notes that the garden was some 15 yards square.

"All this was the work of Captain Wells, of whom it is unfortunate that so little is known, for he was Utah's first white agriculturist, and the buckets of water he poured upon his garden made him the first white man in Utah to practice irrigation."<sup>4</sup> ▼

1 [http://www.onlineutah.com/goodyear\\_mileshistory\\_02.shtml](http://www.onlineutah.com/goodyear_mileshistory_02.shtml)

2 *Utah Historical Quarterly* 21.3 (July 1953): 209.

3 *Journal of Discourses*, 8:288.

4 *Utah Historical Quarterly* 21.4 (October 1953): 314, 315.





*Pack up*

**"The COVERED  
WAGON"**

*and bring  
the whole  
family!*



**TAKE A TREK**

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SCHOOL  
HOUSE  
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**SUP EVENING at the PARK!**

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# Patty Bartlett Sessions

**P**atty Bartlett was born in Bethel, Maine, on February 4, 1795. When she was 17 years old she married David Sessions. David was born and raised in Vermont and had moved to Maine when he was 20 years old. David and Patty, known for their industry, purchased a farm and then a sawmill. Later they erected a gristmill and also ran a roadhouse. Patty also practiced midwifery, beginning soon after she was married.

In 1833 they met the Mormon missionaries and were later baptized into the Church. Soon after, they followed the counsel to "gather" and moved to be with the Saints in Missouri and later Nauvoo. They came west with the Saints and arrived in the Salt Lake Valley in September of 1847. All of this time, Patty was busy as a

midwife. She delivered 248 babies in her first year in the valley and nearly 4,000 thousand during her lifetime.

Patty was a skilled gardener and orchardist. She kept her family and neighbors well supplied with produce. Gardening is mentioned frequently in her diary. The following comments about her gardening and excerpts from her diary are from *Mormon Midwives* by Clair Noall, *Utah Historical Quarterly*, Volume 10, 1942:

"Now we see her weighing her seed,





## Diary Entry

which consisted of quantities of wheat, corn, and peas. She must have cherished these stores along the way, for nothing was more precious than the potential food supplies. With the exception of the sego bulb the soil of the valley yielded no food. Every shoot had to be coaxed from the ground. Since Mr. Sessions was often away with his herds, and on his farm about ten miles north of the Fort, Patty was her own gardener in the city a great deal of the time. The pride and love with which she cultivated her land can be understood only in terms of the priceless value of her crops.

"Although her medical work and her garden kept her busy both day and night throughout the years, Patty had time for many other activities. It is said that at one time she picked up one-hundred bushels of potatoes in a single day.

**"Wednesday, June 14, 1848.**

'Worked in the garden.'

**"Thursday, June 15, 1848.**

'I worked in the garden every day, nights and mornings.'

**"Monday, June 19, 1848.**

'Worked in the garden.'

**"Tuesday, June 20, 1848.**

'Worked in the garden.'

**"Friday, June 23, 1848.**

'I have worked in the garden until I am almost done out.'

**"Thursday, June 29, 1848.**

'Run water through our ground.'

"Then into July, 1848; Patty was working so hard in her life-giving garden that she could not sleep. She weeded until her arms were lame, and watered whenever there was an opportunity.

**"July 17, 1848.**

'I have worked hard all the week to take care of the cows, calves, and garden.'

**"Sunday, July 23, 1848.**

'Did not go to meetings; have to watch the garden.'

"During the summer of 1848, there were plenty of green corn, cucumbers, and squash in the valley, which was a blessing, as the Mormon crickets had that spring devoured the first crop of wheat.

**"Friday, September 1, 1848.**

'Snow on the mountains. The frost did no harm.'

**"September 29, 1848:**

'Brigham [Young] and wife came here with her mother and his daughter and feasted on melons.'

"All of this occurred during her first year in the valley. She obviously carried seeds across the plains in 1847, so that when spring broke in 1848 she could immediately go to work to prepare the ground and plant her garden. Subsequent years found her just as industrious where her gardening was concerned. In 1861, when she was 66 years old, she fell from her neighbor's doorstep and sprained her ankle, and was lame for many weeks. Her son Perrigrine made her some crutches. With these to help, she 'continued watering and weeding here garden.' On Friday, September 13, 1861, she wrote, 'I do not go to meeting; stay at home to watch my fruit to keep it from being stolen.' Later that month she wrote, 'I pared apples and strung them to dry.'

"Patty Sessions entered many accounts in a day-book, which shows that she made a good living from her gardens and her orchard. She is credited with developing a variety of plum, appropriately named the 'Sessions Plum.' Her lifetime covered nearly a century, for had she lived 53 more days she would have been 99 years old at the time of her death."





### Utah's Grasshoppers

Utah Territory received its share or more of visits from the grasshoppers in the first 30 to 35 years of settlement. The report of the Entomological Commission of 1877 claimed that they had appeared in Utah every year except two since 1851, explaining that "this Territory is liable to suffer more or less, especially in the northern portion."<sup>1</sup>

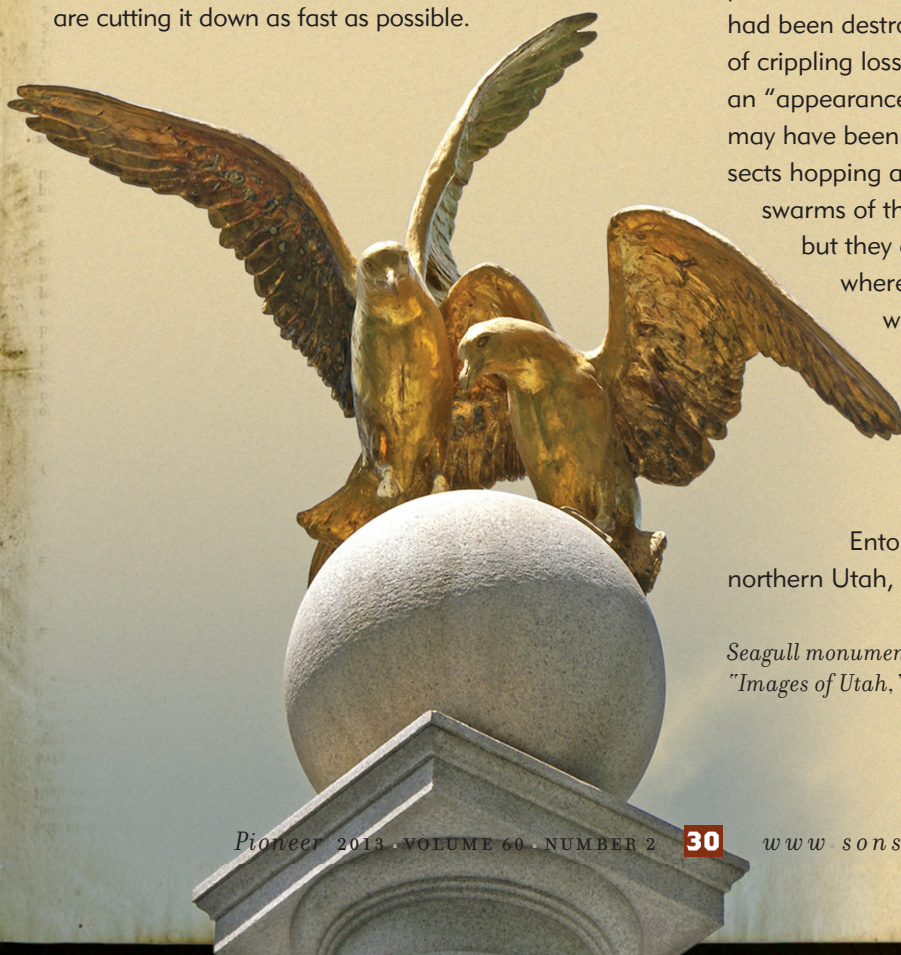
The worst year, by any measurement, was 1855, when grasshoppers invaded the territory from the far north through Iron County, wiping out the third sowing of some crops in Salt Lake County, destroying all or nearly all of the grain in some Iron County towns, and denuding whole fields elsewhere. Following a trip throughout the territory in the spring of 1855, Heber C. Kimball wrote to his son William, describing the extent of the devastation:

"From this place south as far as we went, the grasshoppers have cut down the grain, and there is not fifty acres now standing of any kind of grain in Salt Lake Valley, and what is now standing, they are cutting it down as fast as possible.

In Utah county the fields are pretty much desolate; in Juab Valley not a green spear of grain is to be seen, nor in Sanpete, nor in Fillmore. In Little Salt Lake they are still sowing, also at Cedar City, that county being so much later the grain is not yet up, but the grasshoppers are there, ready to sweep down the grain as soon as it comes up. In the north as far as Boxelder the scenery is the same. . . . and to look at things at this present time, there is not the least prospect of raising one bushel of grain in the valleys this present season. . . . I must say there is more green stuff in the gardens in G. S. L. City than there is in all the rest of the counties; still there is a great many of the gardens in the city entirely ruined. Brother Wm. C. Staines told me this morning that he had 500,000 young apple trees come up and they are all cut down to the ground, and many gardens where the peach trees were full of peaches, every leaf and peach are gone."<sup>2</sup>

Twenty years later, it was still estimated that 70 percent of the cereals, vegetables, and fruits that year had been destroyed, making 1855 stand out as a year of crippling loss.<sup>3</sup> What did the settlers consider to be an "appearance" of grasshoppers? In some years it may have been nothing more than a few indigenous insects hopping around in the fields. On other occasions, swarms of them flew overhead for days at a time, but they did not necessarily do serious damage where they were sighted. In some years they were observed in the fall, depositing eggs that hatched the following spring, but no damage was done during the year of the egg-laying. In some communities crops were wiped out several years in succession. In 1877 the Entomological Commission reported that northern Utah, especially Cache Valley, was visited by

*Seagull monument on Temple Square, photo by Atelier Teee, "Images of Utah," flickriver.com*







grasshoppers every year from 1854 to 1870.<sup>4</sup> Yet in response to a survey in 1875, the officers of the Deseret Agricultural and Manufacturing Society reported the appearance of the "devastating Grasshopper" only in 1855 and 1866 through 1872, specifying that the 1866 appearance consisted only of depositing eggs. This indicates only six or seven years of grasshopper destruction severe enough to mention.

In summary, research shows that the peak periods of grasshopper invasion and devastation seem to have been 1854–56 (with 1855 being the worst year of the century), 1867–72, and 1876–79. Utah was practically free from serious grasshopper problems the last 20 years of the century. Assessing the number of grasshoppers invading Utah is difficult. Appearances were described with such terms as "very numerous," "immense swarms," "by the millions," or "myriads." A more specific, though not necessarily exact, report from Tooele in 1855 claimed that there were about 40 grasshoppers on every stalk of corn.<sup>5</sup> A correspondent

from Pleasant Grove described the grasshoppers there with perhaps a bit of hyperbole:

"I do not think there were any more in Egypt in the time of Moses than there are now on my place, for the ground is literally the color of grasshoppers. We have to shut our doors to keep them out of our houses. The well, the cellar, the water ditches, everything is filled with the pests." ▼

1 *First Annual Report of the U.S. Entomological Commission*, 54.

2 *Journal History*, May 29, 1855.

3 *Deseret Evening News*, May 13, 1875.

4 *First Annual Report of the U.S. Entomological Commission*, 103

5 *Deseret News*, September 5, 1855.

Excerpts from Davis Bitton and Linda P. Wilcox, "Pestiferous Ironclads: The Grasshopper Problem in Pioneer Utah," *Utah Historical Quarterly*, 46 #4. See *Utah History to Go* at [http://historytogo.utah.gov/utah\\_chapters/pioneers\\_and\\_cowboys/pestiferousironclads.html](http://historytogo.utah.gov/utah_chapters/pioneers_and_cowboys/pestiferousironclads.html)







BY ESTHER TRUITT HENRICHSEN

Garden Designer at Thanksgiving Point

# The Gardens *at* Thanksgiving Point

*Created in the Pioneer Spirit*

When the Mormon Pioneers arrived in Utah, they courageously took the semi-arid landscape and built gardens, farms, and cities from scratch. Using the Zion city plan as a template and guide, many communities were created in Utah and Idaho, through Arizona and Nevada, and all the way to California. Behind all this hard work was Brigham Young, quoting from the pulpit Biblical scripture that encouraged the very powerful idea of making the desert blossom as a rose (see Isaiah 35:1).



The Gardens at Thanksgiving Point do not look like Pioneer-era gardens, but in spirit there are many similarities. On Valentine's Day in 1995, Alan and Karen Ashton purchased a five-generation dairy farm near the Point of the Mountain in Lehi, Utah. They wanted a place where their family could get back to nature and enjoy riding horses and caring for the animals. The large, windswept property they bought is bordered by the Jordan River and the I-15 freeway and is divided through the middle by railroad tracks. The property has a rich history as Native American summering grounds, and the 19th-century Overland Stage and Pony Express Trails pass through the land. The Ashton family ultimately created Thanksgiving Point

on the space to share their good fortune with other families in the community.

As with early pioneer gardens, scripture was also present in the creation of the Gardens at Thanksgiving Point. Scattered like jewels throughout the garden are small brass plaques engraved with scriptural verses. On top of the mound of the Vista Garden, on a plaque at the base of a column, is the scripture that sets the garden's theme: "For the Lord shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody" (Isaiah 51:3).









# HUNTSMAN WORLD SENIOR GAMES

October  
7-19,  
2013



## 1987

- About 300 participants
- 7 sports
- 8 venue sites
- Majority of participants from Utah
- No health screening
- Men and women ages 55 and better
- Dedicated to peace, health, and friendship
- John and Daisy Morgan founded the games

## 2013

- Estimated 10,000+ athletes
- 27 sports
- 113 venue sites
- 65 countries and all 50 states represented
- 13 health screenings
- Men and women ages 50 and better
- Dedicated to peace, health, friendship, and fun!
- John and Wilma Morgan continue the dream!

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